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Security Council

Forty-ninth Year

Provisional

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Thursday, 21 April 1994, 9.35 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Keating	(New Zealand)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Cardenas
	Brazil	Mr. Fujita
	China	Mr. Chen Jian
	Czech Republic	Mr. Vanhara
	Djibouti	Mr. Olhaye
	France	Mr. Ladsous
	Nigeria	Mr. Ayewah
	Oman	Mr. Al-Khussaiby
	Pakistan	Mr. Marker
	Russian Federation	Mr. Vorontsov
	Rwanda	Mr. Bizimana
	Spain	Mr. Yañez Barnuevo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir David Hannay
	United States of America	Mr. Inderfurth

Agenda

The situation concerning Rwanda

Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (S/1994/470)

94-85562 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Rwanda

Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (S/1994/470)

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda, document S/1994/470. Members of the Council also have before them document S/1994/488, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to the following documents: S/1994/420, letter dated 12 April 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Cameroon to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; S/1994/428, letter dated 13 April 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; S/1994/430 and S/1994/446, letters dated 13 and 15 April 1994, respectively, from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; S/1994/440, letter dated 14 April 1994 from the Executive Secretary of the Organization of African Unity to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council; and document S/1994/442, letter dated 13 April 1994 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

Members of the Council have also received photocopies of letters dated 21 April 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Uganda to the United Nations and from the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, which will be issued under the symbols S/1994/479 and S/1994/481, respectively.

The President: It is my understanding that the Council is now ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Ayewah (Nigeria): The situation in Rwanda, following the sad event of 6 April, has generated major concern on the part of the international community, and rightly so. As a result of the political and ethnic killings which have taken place and which, as we speak this evening, show no signs of abating, no fewer than 20,000 deaths have been recorded. These brutal murders have affected not only the Rwandese people, but also, at a very early stage of the crisis, some personnel of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR). What is particularly tragic is that, in spite of the efforts made so far by UNAMIR officials, the Secretary-General's Special Representative and the Field Commander, together with the efforts of regional leaders and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), no success has been achieved in the task of establishing a cease-fire between the belligerent parties. Yet without this cease-fire UNAMIR's operation and the prospects of restarting the peace process within the framework of the Arusha peace plan stand gravely jeopardized.

My delegation wishes to place on record its thanks to the Secretary-General for his special report of 20 April 1994 on the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda, which constituted the basis of the draft resolution now before the Council. My delegation regrets to say, however, that none of the three options presented in the report completely meets the satisfaction of the Nigerian Government.

Option one, which recommends the massive deployment of a United Nations force in Rwanda under Chapter VII of the Charter, is, in the circumstances, not feasible, considering that no such force can be raised immediately. And my Government is not exactly certain that enforcement process and action would really meet the security and political challenges posed by the present circumstances in Rwanda.

Option three, which recommends the total withdrawal of UNAMIR, an option which is not supported by the Secretary-General, is also not acceptable

to my delegation - first, because it is defeatist, and, secondly, because it would seriously, if not irretrievably, undermine the credibility of the Security Council as the organ charged with the responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.

The second option, which is a reduced force level of UNAMIR in Rwanda and a redefined mandate and role, with the possibility of a reversal to increased strength as soon as a cease-fire is established and upon the recommendation of the Secretary-General, seems, therefore, a reasonable option, which my delegation will be able to support, although reluctantly.

As the world has witnessed the carnage and slaughter which now have gone on for weeks in Rwanda, many have wondered whether we as a community have really made our best efforts to assist the peoples of Rwanda, or if we have simply been content to say that the responsibility is for the Rwandese alone and that it is they who must take full responsibility for their actions. The coming days and months will be especially critical for the United Nations in Rwanda, and the question must be resolved whether the United Nations will turn its back on Rwanda or be prepared to do a little more to save the lives of many innocent civilians in the face of the vicious rage and mindless violence of some of the elements of rival parties and groups.

This issue, in the view of my delegation, transcends politics. It is a moral question and goes to the heart of the credibility of the United Nations. Its implications will have echoes well beyond Rwanda.

The Government of Nigeria is grateful to the Secretary-General, his Special Representative and the Force Commander and personnel of UNAMIR, who have been engaged in carrying out the United Nations mandate in Rwanda under extremely difficult circumstances. We commend the positive role the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the leaders of the region have played in helping to try to bring an end to the conflict and the carnage in Rwanda.

Once again, Nigeria calls upon the parties to cease all hostilities and agree to a cease-fire immediately, and to cooperate fully with the ongoing efforts of the United Nations and the OAU to resolve the conflict in Rwanda.

Finally, as soon as the conditions in Rwanda have become opportune, we wish to recall that the generosity of the international community will be challenged once again to provide emergency humanitarian and relief materials to the needy population of Rwanda. We hope that, when that time comes, such assistance will be favourably considered.

Mr. Al-Khussaiby (Oman): At the outset, my delegation would like to convey through you, Mr. President, our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive reports on the situation in Rwanda.

My delegation too has been following with deep concern the tragic events that have recently taken place in Rwanda. It expresses deep regret over the untimely demise of the two Presidents - Juvenal Habyarimana of Rwanda and Cyprien Ntaryamira of Burundi - resulting from their unfortunate plane accident *en route* to Kigali airport.

The current violent events in Rwanda have disrupted the peace process that had already been initiated in that country with the signing of the Arusha peace agreement. It has been evident that the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) will not be able to carry out its duties effectively in the circumstances prevailing in Rwanda.

Since its establishment in 1993, UNAMIR has been exerting commendable and vigorous efforts to help the Rwandese people in the implementation of the Arusha peace agreement. Nevertheless, its presence in Rwanda now, in the present situation, is considered to be very risky owing to the lack of agreement by the two conflicting parties on a cease-fire and to the absence of a central authority in that country.

While appreciating the position that calls for the continuation of the UNAMIR mandate, aimed at strengthening the credibility of the United Nations in that country, we now believe that it would be most appropriate for the time being to reduce the presence of UNAMIR to a minimum. However, a United Nations political presence must be preserved by allowing the representative of the Secretary-General in Rwanda to carry on with his most vital initiative and his intermediary efforts between the conflicting parties.

My country supports that alternative because the Rwandese parties are still hesitant to agree to declare Kigali airport as a no-man's land and to put it under the control of UNAMIR. Undoubtedly, it will be very difficult given the current conditions in Rwanda to guarantee the safety of UNAMIR personnel; this would

deter them from carrying out their tasks. Should conditions improve in Rwanda, the Council would be able to review the situation and reconsider the mandate accordingly, including the composition of UNAMIR.

Under the circumstances, and in the light of what I have just said, my delegation believes that the most appropriate alternative for the current situation in Rwanda is the option that calls for the reduction of UNAMIR while preserving a United Nations political presence in Rwanda.

With these views in mind, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before the Council.

Mr. Olhaye (Djibouti): The latest report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Rwanda, of today's date, makes for very sobering reading. This terrible tragedy in Rwanda continues to sadden my delegation deeply. With its unacceptable loss of life and its striking physical destruction, this crisis is no doubt an outward manifestation of long-ingrained ethnic tensions reflected in the history and ongoing political process of the country, culminating once again in a situation in which the ordinary people are made to suffer and die.

Although the warning signals were clearly evident, and in fact repeatedly taken note of, it is, with hindsight, regrettable that the peace process leading to the establishment of the agreed transitional institutions called for in last year's Arusha peace agreement was never completed. Certainly, it is to be regretted that it did not happen in a timely manner, having been delayed constantly by a lack of consensus among the participating political parties. Without the agreement of all parties, the consensus upon which progress in the transitional period and the establishment of transitional institutions were based could not be achieved.

My delegation feels that the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) and its Force Commander, General Dallaire, and the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Jacques-Roger Booh Booh, have performed a very commendable task in holding this situation together in order to buy time for the many internal manifestations to work themselves out. As the Secretary-General noted in his report to us of 30 March 1994, the cease-fire was holding, although deteriorating, and UNAMIR continued to play a stabilizing role. In fact, UNAMIR's phase-one military tasks were completed ahead of schedule. In the humanitarian assistance area, as would be expected, many problems were encountered, but here again the situation was being contained and met. One of the chief areas of concern was that of difficulties caused by the number of returning refugees - a good sign in fact.

Unfortunately, as later events have demonstrated, surface calm simply masked a tide of emotional power capable of exploding with a sufficient trigger. While we believed that no incident was capable of being such a trigger, the downing of President Habyarimana's plane and his death provided the necessary pretext to commence the disruption that led to the ensuing chaos. Therefore, while the Secretary-General could note in his report just three weeks ago that

> "Through their respect of the cease-fire, the parties have demonstrated that they remain committed to the peace process" *(S/1994/360, para. 45)*,

it must have been known that the President's death would overwhelm the political process - unlike the surprising situation in neighbouring Burundi, whose President died in the same crash.

The results are familiar to us all. Reports tell of piles of bodies, mutilated in indescribable fashion, littering the streets, and of hospitals transformed into virtual prisons. And the country remains a killing-field.

It is a situation in which the United Nations is perhaps the only entity capable of preserving some order and saving lives, while bringing about a halt to the fighting so that negotiations leading to a return to the Arusha Agreement principles can be initiated.

Of the three options offered to us by the Secretary-General for United Nations action, option three - complete United Nations withdrawal - given the likelihood of the bloodletting which would certainly follow, must be seen as both inhuman and unacceptable. It would undermine all the good the United Nations has done and stands in a position to do.

My delegation, in fact, would argue for a position intermediate between the Secretary-General's options one and two. We see not so much the need to coerce the combatants into a cease-fire and force law and order as the need to maintain minimum safety for innocent civilians and to offer some protection, while pushing for a return to negotiations. The United Nations should certainly be able to provide, with the acceptance of both parties, safety and refuge for innocent civilians. By agreement, neither party would attack such areas under

the threat of being charged with international human rights violations. Additionally, by agreement, United Nations headquarters should be considered secure or diplomatic areas which neither party could violate. Given these factors, therefore, my delegation feels the most workable option is probably option two, which we support, through the draft resolution before us.

It will perhaps not permit the United Nations to undertake those tasks which we feel they can and should undertake, and, through its reduced presence and visibility, may indirectly contribute to prolonging the violence. While this is certainly regrettable, it is preferable to a total withdrawal.

UNAMIR should also attempt to play a role in the continued delivery of humanitarian aid, and both sides should be held responsible. There should be areas of the country where civilians can receive such aid without the conditions of chaos prevailing the capital, Kigali.

Mention must also be made of the strong contribution of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and of Heads of State in the region, particularly Tanzania. On the other hand, great responsibility for this tragedy must be borne by the Government forces, which have been much less than successful in restraining their cadres and instilling discipline. Likewise, for its part, the Rwandese Patriotic Front has not helped matters by its implacable posture towards negotiations and its rigid set of preconditions. Thus, while each party gears itself for a final showdown, the badly needed cease-fire eludes us, and the hacking, spearing and shooting continue. Before all else, we must have an immediate cease-fire.

What makes Rwanda a real tragedy is that there does not seem to be any way to avoid a return to the Arusha principles. What we have is an overwhelming ethnic disparity in numbers tied to a history of disparity in power which can be resolved only through a coming together of all parties to arrive at a consensus. This is exactly what is provided for in the Arusha Agreement. Domination by any party would simply be a return to the situation which led to the breakdown in the first place. Hopefully, this realization has taken hold in neighbouring Burundi and is responsible for its relative calm in the face of nearly identical circumstances. If so, it may be an example of what can be achieved in Rwanda if prompt action is taken for a cease-fire and negotiations.

To look into the eyes of Rwanda's innocent civilians and see the terrible fear of death when there are so many things the United Nations should be in a position to do, if mandated, is difficult to accept. This is perhaps a basic purpose of the United Nations: the safety and protection of the innocent, particularly in a situation that would allow such actions in many non-military ways. And, contrary to what some have said, there does exist a will to do this.

In the words of Roger Booh-Booh, "We came to assist Rwanda, but we cannot impose any solution on the Rwandan people, who have to help us to help them".

Mr. Bizimana (Rwanda): My delegation wishes first of all to thank the Secretary-General for the efforts he is exerting in connection with the situation in Rwanda.

In regard to this situation, I wish to note that since 6 April 1994 Rwanda has been experiencing the most critical times in its history. In this respect, it will be recalled that it was on that date that the people of Rwanda were profoundly afflicted by the assassination of the Head of State of Rwanda, when his aircraft was downed at the Kigali airport while he was returning from Dar-es-Salaam, where he had participated in a regional summit meeting devoted to the return of peace in Rwanda and Burundi. This ignoble act cost the life of the President of the Republic of Burundi also, and we take this opportunity to express once again our condolences to the family of President Ntaryamira and to the Government and people of Burundi.

The assassination of the Head of State of Rwanda caused consternation and stupour among the people of Rwanda. This tragic event gave rise to such furor that it was followed by acts of violence that, unfortunately, cost the life of some well-known persons and thousands of ordinary civilians. We deeply regret this. We regret also the death of some United Nations personnel, and we again express our heartfelt condolences in connection with what has happened.

The tragedy that the people of Rwanda are living through reached its climax when this climate of violence was exacerbated by the resumption of hostilities and by armed attacks, accompanied by a wave of massacres, launched by the Rwandese Patriotic Front. Hence, the interim Government, established on 9 April 1994, set itself the objective of restoring order and the security of people and property, and of pursuing contacts with the Rwandese Patriotic Front, to ensure the putting into place without delay of enlarged transition institutions, within the framework of the Arusha Peace Agreement.

Obviously, success in this field depends on the cessation of hostilities and the international community's support in coming to the aid of the suffering people. Faced with this tragedy, the international community has reacted in a way that has often been controversial and often selective, and, because of this, the people of Rwanda at a certain time felt - and indeed still feels today - abandoned to its sad fate.

Indeed, over and above the concern - certainly legitimate - over the evacuation of foreign nationals, the international community does not seem to have acted in an appropriate manner to reply to the anguished appeal of the people of Rwanda. This question has often been examined from the point of view of the ways and means to withdraw the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), without seeking to give the appropriate weight to the concern of those who have always believed, rightly, that, in view of the security situation now prevailing in Rwanda, UNAMIR's numbers should be increased to enable it to contribute to the re-establishment of the cease-fire and to assist in the establishment of security conditions that could bring an end to the violence.

This increase in UNAMIR's numbers would above all have enabled the humanitarian bodies and the non-governmental organizations to provide humanitarian assistance to all the peoples in distress. That approach - which the OAU has always endorsed fully - would have enabled the Council truly to be an instrument at the service of the peace and security of all the peoples. Otherwise, how can we respond to this contradictory reaction, to this policy of double standards, which, in certain peace-keeping operations, is reflected in the strengthening of military and logistical means when security deteriorates, whereas in other cases the strategy is to regard any factor of insecurity as a sufficient reason for the United Nations to pack its bags and leave?

The credibility of our Council and the image of our Organization are at stake. In this difficult situation, we have especially appreciated the courage of the UNAMIR troops and the troop-contributing countries, which have resisted partisan pressures exerted by those who, when they leave, want all the UNAMIR staff to leave Rwanda.

In the draft resolution the Council states that it is appalled at the violence and hostilities, which have resulted in the death of thousands of civilians and the displacement of a significant number of the Rwandese population. The option chosen by the Council, reducing the number of troops in UNAMIR to approximately 200, is not a proper response to this crisis, as no measures are envisaged to help those exposed to all kinds of peril as a result of the hostilities.

Our vote on the draft resolution will indicate that the people of Rwanda continue to hope that the Council will realize that it has a duty to act resolutely to maintain peace in Rwanda and to guarantee stability in the region. Our vote will also indicate that my country associates itself with the Council's appeal for an immediate cessation of hostilities and the violence.

To that end, the Council should persuade the Rwandese Patriotic Front to agree to a comprehensive cease-fire, it being understood that it is futile to think that the crisis in Rwanda can be settled by military means. The Rwandese Patriotic Front must be made responsible for its attitude in wishing to continue hostilities, to perpetuate the current violence and to continue to perpetrate massacres in the areas under its control.

Moreover, my country hopes that the Council's request that all countries avoid any action that might exacerbate the situation in Rwanda will be respected. In this regard, we emphasize the important role the United Nations Observer Mission must play on the Rwanda-Uganda border as an indispensable factor for regional stability.

Finally, we associate ourselves with the appeal to the international community to provide increased humanitarian assistance commensurate with the scale of the human tragedy in Rwanda.

The President: I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Djibouti, France, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 912 (1994).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Ladsous (France) *(interpretation from French):* France was deeply shocked by the tragedy which cost the lives of the Presidents of Rwanda and Burundi as they were returning from a regional summit devoted to the search for a peaceful solution to the crisis in the region.

France is dismayed by the scale of the violence which followed, resulting in thousands of victims among the civilian population and the deaths of United Nations peace-keeping mission soldiers. My country pays special tribute to the Belgian blue helmets who fell on the field of honour in an international cause to which they committed themselves - sadly, to the ultimate sacrifice.

France also pays tribute to the active role being played in this tragic situation by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and by the Force Commander of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) to conclude a cease-fire and re-establish dialogue between the parties. My country emphasizes that no military solution is acceptable; indeed, it is not possible. Any party's victory would be pyrrhic, plunging the country deeper into violence for an indefinite period. The Arusha Peace Agreement remains the only legitimate framework for seeking a political solution to the problem in Rwanda.

The United Nations gave the Rwandese parties several days to conclude a cease-fire, which would have allowed UNAMIR to carry out the mandate given to it by resolution 872 (1993). Unfortunately, there is still no cease-fire, and the Security Council was therefore compelled to reconsider the conditions for UNAMIR's presence, reducing it to a minimal level. We hope that the Rwandese parties will come to their senses and realize that the United Nations can neither take their place nor impose peace on them.

In this context, we commend the initiatives of the countries of the region, particularly by the President of Tanzania as facilitator for the Arusha process. We hope that the meeting planned for the end of this week will allow the Rwandese parties to resume the path towards peace. The United Nations is ready to assist them in this at any time and to accompany them in the process, which is not only crucial to Rwanda and its sorely tried people, but vital for the stability of that entire region of the African continent.

The President: There are no further speakers. The next meeting of the Security Council to continue the consideration of the item on the agenda will be fixed in consultations with members of the Council.

The meeting rose at 10.35 p.m.